



## TIP OF THE SPEAR

### MARINES BOOST CRISIS RESPONSE FORCE IN SPAIN



Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response based in Morón, Spain will grow from about 550 Marines to 850. The Spanish government approved the additional Marines, and granted the unit another year at Morón Air Base to respond to crises in Africa March 11. The land-based crisis response force was stood up last year to fill a gap in available Navy amphibious ships in the region. The crisis-response Marines can be tapped to carry out a variety of operational missions -- including embassy reinforcement -- throughout Africa. "Spain is a solid ally and steadfast partner," said Eileen Lainez, a spokeswoman at the Pentagon. "We are

thankful to Spain for continuing to support the mission of the Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response at Morón by agreeing to an extension of the mission duration, as well as an increase in the number of Marines who can temporarily base there." [Read more](#)



## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Lance Cpl. Steven T. Peterson, a machine gunner with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division and part of Black Sea Rotational Force 14, subdues a simulated enemy during a mechanical arm control holds course after being exposed to oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray on Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, Romania, March 5. The Marines were directly exposed to the OC spray, then instructed to complete a course with different stations which required them to execute different take down techniques on a simulated enemy combatant. Black Sea Rotational Force 14 is a contingent of Marines to maintain positive relations with partner nations, regional stability and increase interoperability while providing the capability for rapid crisis response, as directed by U.S. European Command, in the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucus regions of Eastern Europe. *(Photo by Lance Cpl. Scott W. Whiting)*



## IN THE NEWS

### REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA TROOPS TRAIN ALONGSIDE MARINES



Georgian Special Mountain and 23rd Light Infantry battalions from the Republic of Georgia completed a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) aboard Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, Feb. 23. The MRE was the capstone event for the battalions before their deployment to Afghanistan. During the first five months of training, U.S. Marines were responsible for mentoring Georgian counterparts in their areas of expertise. "While the future of the Afghanistan war effort is subject to the political process, it is safe to say that our partnership with the Georgians going forward is certain," said Col. Matt Baker, commanding officer of the Marine

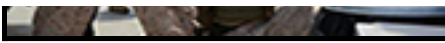
Corps Security Cooperation Group. [Read more](#)

### MARSOC OPERATORS ROTATE INTO GUAM TO TRAIN WITH SEALS



Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) has initiated a rotational deployment to Guam that will see Marine operators training with Navy SEALs on a regular basis. The rotation follows the command's announcement last year that it would align its three battalions with the U.S. military's global combatant commands, focusing on the Asia-Pacific region, Africa and the Middle East. In keeping with the regional strategy, MARSOC will use the deployments to provide a persistent forward-deployed presence





in U.S. Pacific Command to strengthen partnership relations and to promote U.S. interests. [Read more](#)

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## 31ST MEU REMEMBERS OPERATION TOMODACHI



Marines and Sailors with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Amphibious Squadron 11 (PHIBRON) held a moment of silence to commemorate the Japanese citizens who lost their lives during the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami on the flight deck of the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD-6). On March 11, 2011, an undersea earthquake with a magnitude of 9.0, the most powerful earthquake to affect Japan, struck off the coast of Honshu. At the time of the disaster, the 31st MEU was on a regularly scheduled patrol, forcing an immediate recall of personnel from port calls in Malaysia and Indonesia. By the end of Operation

Tomodachi, the MEU -- PHIBRON team distributed more than 164,000 pounds of food and thousands of gallons of water to the Japanese people. Through it all, a deep respect grew between the citizens of Oshima and the Marines of the MEU that remains to this day. [Read more](#)

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## MARINE CORPS TRIALS HELP WOUNDED WARRIORS FOCUS ON ABILITIES



The 4th annual Marine Corps Trials kicked off March 4 at Camp Pendleton, Calif., where more than 300 wounded service members will focus on their abilities, not their disabilities. Some lost limbs, suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or were diagnosed with illnesses like non-epileptic seizures. The trials include seven sports with four teams competing: battalion west, battalion east, Marine veterans and international allies (which include wounded warriors from Australia, Canada, France, Columbia and more). "They got this disability or that disability, but the fact is that they fall down seven and get up eight [times]," said

Iraq veteran Eric Calley, who suffers from PTSD. [Read more](#)

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## U.S. MARINES VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME AT LOCAL UGANDAN SCHOOL



Marines and Sailors with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Africa took a break from training to hand out clothes and candy at a local school for orphans and underprivileged children. "So [the local population] know we're not just here just to train the military," said Gunnery Sgt. David Walcot. "We're here to help as well." The service members played and ran around with the local children after handing out the clothes and candy. The curious children would ask them questions about where they are from, why their muscles are so big, why their hair is so weird and about many other differences between them. [Read more](#)



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

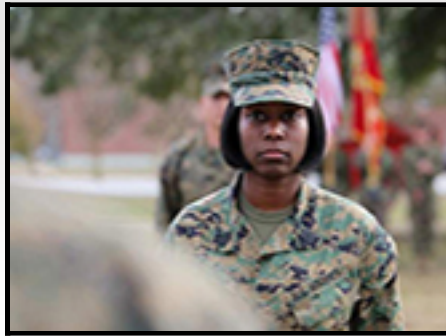
### MARCH 13, 1943

The first group of 71 Women Marine officer candidates arrived at the U.S. Midshipmen School (Women's Reserve) at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. The Navy's willingness to share training facilities enabled the Marine Corps to begin training Marine Corps Women's Reserve (MCWR) officers just one month after the creation of the MCWR was announced.



## MARINE OF THE WEEK

## CORPS NAMES FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE AS MEU SERGEANT MAJOR



Sgt. Maj. Lanette Wright will make history this week when she is named the Corps' first female sergeant major of a Marine Expeditionary Unit. Wright will take over as the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit's sergeant major, the first female Marine to serve in that capacity since women began deploying with the units in the 1990s. Wright currently serves in the command inspector general's office with 2nd Marine Logistics Group at Camp Lejeune. She previously served as the sergeant major for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265. [Read more](#)

## OUR MISSION

*In the words of Lt. Gen. Victor H. "Brute" Krulak, "The United States does not need a Marine Corps... the United States wants a Marine Corps." As America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, the Marine Corps is deployed across the globe, standing ready to respond to any crisis. The Marine Corps Connection is your one-stop source for the latest Marine Corps news and is published weekly by the Division of Public Affairs at Headquarters Marine Corps. **Stay connected to your Marines!***



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